

Vindiciæ Pædo-Baptismi :
OR, A
CONFIRMATION
OF
AN ARGUMENT
Lately Emitted for
Infants Baptism :
IN A
LETTER
To a Reverend Divine
OF
The Church of England.

By *R. B. M.D.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Thomas Simmons*, at the
Prince's Arms in *Ludgate Street*. 1685.

1685
B973



SIR,

I Was at the Point of making a Resolution before I receiv'd yours (of *June 9.*) wholly to neglect that Libellous *Disputation* (as it is called) between a Doctor and an Apothecary ; as a thing that doth not only betray the Unfincerity, the Artifices, the Impotent Passions of him that wrote *It* ; but that to a Prudent and Judicious Reader, doth (as is said of the Viper) carry in its own Bowels, Causes that in time will destroy it.

But seeing you Advise me that it may not be unfit that something be said to it ; and I know we ought not to have too good an Opinion of the World, which generally, being malicious, and invidious, is apter to take impression from a witty Calumny and Detraction, than from the soundest and most solid Reasoning and Argument, on these and the like considerations, I now resolve to Reply.

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But

But in doing so, that I resemble not my Adversary, whom not only I, but many sober and indifferent Persons do condemn for Impertinence, for Falshood, for Bitterness, for Peremptoriness and Presumption, and for such other Courses as (to use the Expression of a Noble Person) tend rather to Rumor and impression in the Vulgar sort, than to the likelihood of any good Effect. For this Reason, I am determined in Replying to him, to propose unto my self for my Example, That wise and Religious Bishop of whom when he returned Answer to a Pamphlet much (it seems) of a nature like to this before me. " My Lord *Bacon* says, That he " remembred that a Fool must be Answered, but not by becoming like " unto him, and considered the matter " which he handled, and not the Person " with whom he dealt.

The Points therefore that I will go upon, shall be only these: *First*, To shew nakedly and truly the Occasion of my engaging with my Adversary in this Controversy. *Secondly*, To shew the Unfairness of his Proceeding in the Publick Management of it, together with

with the motives, which (as I suppose) induced him to that Unfairness. *Thirdly*, To Note but as it were in passing, and by the By, the Undue Aspersions which he casts upon me, in reference to my Argument ; together with the Malice is in them. *Fourthly*, Briefly again to state the Argument I made, and to demonstrate, That as it is not a Log (as he calls it) nor *Uncouth*, so that he is still extreamly *Affrighted* at it. (for he dares not touch it ;) and still hath cause to be so.

As for my Engaging with him ; the first *Occasion* (as I have said already) was purely *Accidental*, and it was drawn on I scarce know how ; he says, by the importunity of the Lady, my readiness to comply with it, and his unwariness ; and let it be so. But a casual, passing, undesigned Discourse it was ; a Discourse that as it did begin, so I thought it would have ended in the same place ; for my part, I scarce had one Thought of it afterwards. But as for any *Insulting* upon him, of which he now complains, and never before that I know of ; and with which he thinks to bespeak the Affections of his Readers (for

indeed he needs them) and to excuse his own Acerbity ; he cannot produce one Witness of *any* ; I am sure, by me : I can many, even of *Persons* that were present at the whole Discourse, to Attest the Contrary. But that he was Insulted upon, and that (in his own Terms) *his Sword was as it were broken over his Head, and with Triumph*, you must believe it ; and yet all the while, the Weapons on both sides, (They) were but Words ; and you can hardly think, He lost *His*, *THE N* ; who, *still*, speaks Swords and Daggers.

But you will tell me ; Well: All this, hitherto, was but a Transient Accidental Discourse, such as might happen every day, when Persons meet who are of different Perswasions, and there is an End. But how came it afterwards to be so *Solemn*, and so *Deliberate*, as from *Words* that are but Birds in the Air, to become *Writings*, which are as Bears at the Stake ? Truly as to this, one would think, by what my Adversary writes, and by the Fashion in which he writes, in his Epistle, and in *Pag. 16. 17.* that nothing but *Resentment* on his part, of the Insolence and
 Affront

Affront that then was offered Him, and a motion of *Vanity* on mine, to Answer his Challenge, drew on this second Engagement; Little else can be inferred from what he hath written concerning it. But indeed, on my part it was nothing less than so, and nothing less on his neither, *Pretendedly*; for all was *Conscience*, nothing but Conscience and enquiry after further Light, with which in a Letter that he sent me above a year and half (he calls it in his usual figure, *Sometime*) after, he importuned my Answer, and prevailed. For who is there, but would have believed (as then I did) that it was Conscience, pure Conscience that Acted him; if he had received from him (as I had) a Letter so concernedly Penn'd, and with so much movement: with so much importunity, and so much seeming sincerity; and if he knew him not any better than I did at that time; for thus his Letter, bearing Date *Sept. 9. 1681.* doth speak in so many words.

UPon this Occasion Honoured Sir;
(and that Occasion was a motion he made me, about Perfecting the Printing)

king and Publishing of a Book of Dr. Worſley's) I ſhall alſo take the boldneſs to remind you of a Conference you were pleaſed ſometime ſince to entertain with my ſelf upon the ſubject of *Infants Baptiſm*, when you were pleaſed to inſiſt upon the Covenant made with *Abraham*, wherein God Promiſed to be a God to him and to his Seed after Him ; from whence you Argued, that in as much as by Vertue of that Covenant both *Abraham* and his Seed after him were to receive the Sign of Circumciſion ; and in as much as the Apoſtle doth expreſſly tell us, that the Bleſſing of *Abraham* was to come upon the Gentiles, through Jeſus Chriſt ; it thence followed, that the Believing Gentiles and their Poſterity alſo, as being the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, had a Right to Baptiſm, which is the Seal of the ſame Covenant under the New Teſtament Adminiſtration. Having ſince that time therefore Revolv'd this Argument of yours in my Thoughts over and over, I could not ſatiſfie my Conſcience till I could either come to ſome ſatisfactory clearneſs in my own mind concerning the Cogency thereof, or other-
wiſe

wise till I had drawn up something or
 other in writing, that might at least be
 a sufficient Justification unto my Self in
 the way of my present Practice. And
 after many *fervent Addresses* and Petiti-
 ons to Heaven, that as I might not
 mistake my way, so that I might not
 Oppose or neglect any part of the Hea-
 venly Truth; I have at length drawn
 up the Inclosed paper, which I do
 therefore now humbly offer to your se-
 rious consideration, with this *Earnest*
 desire, that if after all that I have now
 said, you shall yet Judge me to be
 under a mistake in the Present Point
 in reference to my Opinion about the
 spirituall seed of Abraham, that you
 will please *at least* to *suggest* to me what
 you think may be substantially Ob-
 jected by way of opposition there-
 unto. I hope dear Sir, that it is the
 Investigation of Truth that both you and
 my self also do aim at, which should
 be *Dearer* to us than all the World be-
 sides; and therefore if notwithstanding
 what I have now offered, you shall
 still apprehend that I have mist it in
 my present Search and Reasonings con-
 cerning it, I beseech you to endeavour
 my

my *Correction* and better *Information* therein.

I have indeed drawn up the Enclosed Paper by way of Postscript to a *large Discourse* in Reference to Infant Baptism, which I had *before* Compiled, wherein I do consider and give answer to all the most material Arguments which are usually Insisted on for the Justification of the Practice of Infant Baptism. And therefore also in the Present Paper you will perceive that I do touch upon some other Arguments than what you were pleased to Insist upon in the formention'd Conference, that I had with you upon this subject. I know dear Sir, that you'll not be Offended with me for making *thus bold* with you, and that you will not Reject what may be substantially offered for the discovery of Truth, though by never so mean a Hand. Now that God would be pleased at length to send forth his Light and his Truth, that all that Love and fear him may Serve and Worship him with one heart and with one shoulder, according to the Primitive Pattern; is the Earnest desire of your most Affectionate and Humble Servant

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Now

Now Sir, is there in this whole Letter the least Insinuation of any Resentment in him? the least of any Insulting over him? or Abuse put upon him? in that which *here* himself calls but a Conference; the softest word in the world? If he had any Resentment at that time, how often hath the Sun gone down on his Wrath! How deeply was it dissimbled! how subtilly masked over with the fair Pretences of Conscience! of Enquiry after further Light! and of Longing for Satisfaction! and All, how faced with seeking of God! — This Letter was that which drew me on in this business; which being a Business of Conscience, as I then believed it, (and who in my Circumstances but would?) I pursued it in my first Reply, with all the Fairness and Candor imaginable: But was Answer'd with so much Presumption, Asperity, and Arrogance, that I must have been as void of Sense, as He of Civility, and Sincerity, not to have seen at last (though somewhat of the latest) that it was not Conscience, and a willingness of Receiving, or of Giving further Light, as was Pretended; but Rooted Malice, and a Lust of Revenge

Revenge that inspir'd him. Conscience was but the Bait, the Hook was under; Let him Print his First, Second, and Third *Answers*, as he sent them to me, and then let the World judge, if it went any less.

And this Reminds me of the second Head on which I am to Discourse to you; and that is, of the unfairness of his Proceeding in the Publick management of this business; and of the Motives, that (as I suppose) Induced him to this unfairness.

His unfairness is, that when it was but *Letters* only that had been *Written* by him to me on this Occasion, and *Letters* only that are *Referred* to by me in those I Published; as also, seeing I wrote not any but on this urgent *Importunity*; and when I *Printed* what I wrote, I was so Candid, so Just, and so exact, that in the Publication which I made, as I Omitted nothing so I added nothing but what I put a Mark upon, that all the world might note it. I say the unfairness is, that, for all this, this *seeker* of Truth and one who as himself tells us, dayly prayeth for the desireable *Unity* of the Spirit in the

Bond

Bond of Peace, that he instead of Publishing the Letters which Indeed he sent, and *as* he sent them, should Print a Base and Fictitious *Disputation* that never was in Reallity, as the Sum of all the Letters that went between us. Where as indeed, he but presents the World with Pieces, and Patches, both of his own Letters, and of mine; and withal, in those Patches (he) so Industriously Disguises, Alters, and abuses the Argument I manage, that tis as impossible to see it in his Libel in its true Proportions and Figure, as to believe, that Base and Barbarous Methods (such as these he uses) are Proper *means*, either of Attaining unto the *Bond of Peace*, or, unto the *Unity of the Spirt*. Thus four Letters, which are the Main ones, are suppressed; the first of which I even now repeated. This is his *unfairness*.

The true Motives, why he did not Publish his Three first Responsory Letters, his Second, Third, and Fourth, as well as his Fifth, and Sixth, (for why he suppressed the *First* of all that was sent, is Evident enough, from what hath been declar'd already,) may
Probably

Probably be presum'd to be these (following.)

First, He did it, to hide from the Observation of his Readers, the Just causes I had of making those Complaints I did in my Letters, of his unfairness, Rudeness, and Vanity? of his bold Assertions, without Proofs, his Cunning Evasions, instead of direct Answers; his always partial, and often false pretended Repetitions; and his Triumphs before the Victory &c. which *undue Proceeding*, used without any provocation or any Example by me, and that too, by a man that breathed nothing but Conscience, but desire of Satisfaction, and seeking of Light in the business, and all this after seeking of God; should *it* be apparent in his Letters, as undoubtedly it is, and I believe he is Conscious it is; as *it* would have had an aspect not very pleasing unto most others, so possibly it might awaken in some of his own party that mean well, and are truly Conscientious, very strange apprehensions, not only of his humor, carriage, and conduct, but even of the main of his Cause. This likely he foresaw.

Secondly,

Secondly, He chose to act his part by way of a Dialogue, rather than of Letters, to hide from the Eyes of his *own Party*, the Strength and Cogency of my *Argument* ; which being *Harmonical*, the force and power of it lyes in the Joynts of it, and in the Reference of its parts ; so that, either by the Dividing and Mangling of the parts, or by the Hudling and Confounding of them together, (both which, at times, he hath done, in his Dispute,) the *force thereof* is unseen, and is lost. And indeed, as he hath managed the businels, he might well hope to perswade his own Party, whose hands likely would be as full of his Books, as empty of mine, that I had said nothing in my Argument but what he there Repeats of it ; which is as true, as that the whole Chapter of the first of *Genesis* is in the Contents of it ; he never giving but an imperfect summary (and that too, many times, with a mixture of falshood) in the Report he makes of what I did propose to be prov'd ; but he mentions not the very Proofs themselves, of what I proposed. This will appear most manifestly, by but comparing

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paring his Pretended Disputation, with my Printed Letters. Had he only Printed *His* Letters, some of his own Party Probably, those of them that are Just and Prudent, would have had recourse also to *mine*. But now, his Disputation speaking all on both sides, they may think, there is no need of that.

Thirdly, it was done to hide the Advantage I had over him in the course of the Argument ; how *I* gained ground, by what steps, and with what *Mediums* ; as also, to conceal that Ter-giversation shifting and shuffling ; that declining the force of my Argument ; and that Insisting on little things that are by the by ; with other such like Artificies, of which I accused him. All this is hinted in *my* Letters, and he was not ignorant, it would be plain by *his* own : Let him shew the Contrary else, by Publishing them. Half an eye may easily discern, that the controversy was almost at an end, before his fifth Letter was written ; which yet, is the first he Publishes. And surely, what ever he says, more was in it then a bare Respect and kindness to his Reader, to *whom* (as he tells us P. 66.)
he

he *would not be burthensome* ; Ay, there was also some little mixture of kindness and Respect unto himself, he knew the Burthening of his Reader (for Burthened certainly he would be, if judicious and Considerate, with Verbosity without sence ; with Commonplacing without discretion ; with skirmishing about but words ; and with other such unseemly and Impertinent Artificies.) he knew, such Burthening of his *Reader* in the Consequence would be a Renewing of that Vexation and Anguish which he had found so grievous, and which he Bemoans so much both in his Epistle, and in his book.
P. 17.

And here, seeing I despair, with all the Provocation *I* can give, to succeed in my design of induciug him to print entirely, and Bonâ cum fide, the suppressed Letters which he sent me, *I* will therefore take occasion, from his *Published Animadversions*, to make his other *Readers* sensible (for you are so already) both of the Credibility of the former Motives, and of the truth of the *charge* Employed in them ; by observing (to *them*) out of *many* Instances

that do occur, but one or ~~two~~ for a *laste*. The first shall be of his *Candour* and sincerity, the Second, of his *way* and Method in Arguing.

The First, which is of his Candour and sincerity, shall be in the Repetition which he makes of the first Paragraph of my first Letter, in which he purposely, but ungratefully omits that part of the Period that Relates to the Movement and Importunity with which he solicited, and even compelled me into this business. For instead of adding (and so *Importunate* and *Iterated Requests* to give you the Result of my most cool and serious considerations of what you have done in it.) he knowing that a passage of that significancy, would make it plain he was the first aggressor, at least as to writing, and that *I* came not in but on his great Solicitation ; and consequently, as it would detect his great ingratitude, so it would interfere with what he often insinuates, about the Rise of the Controversy. Therefore, he Craftily Omits it, and only draws a Line ; which only notes, that something is wanting, but no body could *Divine*,
it

it was this; *the* sense going on so smooth without it.

The former, is one instance of his ingenuity and of his sincerity, but we have another which do's much resemble it, (*viz.*) that of publishing to the world his Reflections on those little Points (for ~~now~~ you may see them to be so) in the first Edition of my Letter, which my self had altered and amended in the second; for though he *knew* I had Corrected and altered them; yet he slyly insinuates in the margin of his dispute, (P. 28 & 32) as if he had not known it, and that the alterations are only in the Print: whereas, I printed nothing in my Letters but what I first sent him, Except *That* in my Last, of which I advertised the Reader, and which I marked with an Asterisme. This is so great an imposture on his Readers, and so great an abuse, that (P. 65.) even himself doth offer something that might pass for an Extenuation, If this *meanness* of his proceeding should ever chance to be Noted. But this is one of his arts still; he *knew* that many would observe the *wound* he gives in the Margin,

that would not much regard *the Balm* he afterward applys, for the healing it; and the less, because it is not applyed directly. So much for his ingenuity and Candour.

As for his *Method* of Arguing; besides a gift he has of telling and Applying of Tales, and of Capping of verses; he uses to pervert the words of his Adversary, and in things of little moment, to raise a dust, and make great a doe; either to blind the *Eyes* of those that shall consider him, or to divert *them*, from what is *the main* in the business; for with *this*, Especially if it be difficult, he is but seldom used to meddle, at all; or if at all, not closely. To manifest this, I but desire his Readers, that after the perusal of the *Title Page* of my *Book* and of my Advertisement, they would observe his *Reflections* upon them; both as to the matter of *them*; as to the manner of them; and as to the design of them. How that for the *matter* of them, they are made upon words only; and for the *manner* of them, upon words distorted from the proper and Genuine sence of their Author; and for the *design* of them, that they are made to expose, and

and abuse, and inodiate, and therefore some of them are often, and most maliciously Inculcated ; and all this, without the least consideration of what is materiall, and substantial, and in confirmation of the Argument.

For, as he is *Witty* enough in little matters, to pervert the sence of his adversary, to raise a Calumny on him, and to make things soberly said to pass for ridiculous ; so he is as *wise* in greater Matters, to avoid any touch of them ; and that for fear of his Head, which, he well remembers (Page 17) once already was in danger, by *having a Sword as it were broken over it.* This I say, is a Truth, and very manifest. For in my *Advertisement*, all that is done by way of *Argument* (and that's no Inconsiderable part of it, the whole consisting of but Nine Leaves, and Six of them are spent *that way, under four considerations*) all *this* he wholly skips over : and, as if it was not, at all, his business, or in his design, at all, to reason and argue, but only to Calumniate, Expose, and abuse ; he that hath so many words for bad, or for Impertinent purposes, hath not one word for that purpose,

which only became him: One would think a man so much in pretensions of Conscience, and of nothing but Conscience in the case, who did only seek to give, or to receive satisfaction, should have judged it *proper* to have considered what was *Argumentative*; and that, whatever else he did, he should be sure not to have left undone the thing that most Imported those ends. But of this not one word, but while he is dealing in his Mint, Annis, and Cummin, (and yet he is not for Tything) he leaves those greater matters undone. I beleive by this, that you will easily infer as I do, that really it was not Conscience, as he at first pretended, in his Letter to me; but it was *Rouzed Courage* as he tells his Reader, in the Epistle to him, that made him so concerned, and so forward in this controversy. And he accordingly manages it, not as a serious matter, a matter of Conscience, for light and Information; but as a business of Quarrel, and of Vanity; only to recover (if he can) his lost Credit, and that Field, which (as himself confesseth P. 17.) once he fairly left me, and now he would unfairly regain, You

You see his unfairness in the Publick Management of the business between us which is the Second Head *I* propounded; *I* now advance to the third, which is to Note (but briefly) the Unjust Aspersions which he makes of Contradiction and Incoherence, and of Ostentation and Vanity, as he scents them in my Discourse; and those he runs upon, under two Heads: the First, with Respect to the Harmony; the Second, to the Novelty of it.

As to the *Harmony*, he says; First that *I* affirm in my Advertisement that in this Controversy, there is no need of Exactness of Criticisme; and yet, that *I* say, namely in one of my Letters, that Gen. 17. 9. 10. must be understood Critically: and that the Apostle was as Critical upon it as *I*, or any other can be.

Secondly, that *I* say in my Advertisement, that *I* was concern'd to see the Article of Infants Baptism to Hang on *Wyres*, and by Geometry, and that *I* could not see it owner of sure and solid Foundations, unless it be as in my Letters *I* lay it; and yet in my Letters *I* applaud Mr. *Baxter's* Argument for it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that in one of my Letters, I call the Opinion of antipedo Baptism a Novelty; and yet had said in another, that it is probable that those who would not suffer little Children to come to Christ to be Blessed, were of the Perswasion of this Anabaptist. These are his Mountains Births as to the Harmony of my Argument.

Really Sir, I know not how, without Blushing, and Begging of your Pardon, for giving you the trouble of so great Impertinencys, to Enter into Discourse of things so Vain, so Frivolous; but since it must be done, I will endeavour to do it as Little to your Disturbance, that is, with as much sobriety and Tendernels, and with as little Amplification, as is Possible: I will but *touch* on these matters, and note them, without Insisting and Staying upon them.

To his First Inputation then I say, that as one may understand a Text made out and unfolded by a Crittick, who himself is no Crittick; so, that I spake of *Exactness* of Critticism; and of that too, as a Part of Humane *learning*; as is Evident by the Coherence, where

where I spake of it. Ay, and when in my Advertisement I affirmed, that there was no need of Exactness of Criticism, as to this Business; I then did and with a direct Prospect unto what I had affirmed in my Letter, both concerning Gen. 17. 9. 10. and the Apostle Paul's being Critical upon it; I say, I did add by way of Limitation (*for the main*) that *for the main* of the Controversy, there was no need of it. And indeed the Controversy for the *main* of it, doth not depend on any Criticism; much less upon Exactness of Criticism, and least of all upon Exactness of Criticism as it is a Part of Humane Learning; one need not to be a great Scholar, a great Philosopher, or a great Critick (as he must be, to be an exact one) to understand that Text, or the Apostles Criticism upon it; which to, is not a Humane Criticism, but a Divine.

To the Second, I grant I did say I was concerned, (and so I was) to see the Article of Infants Baptism hang on wyres, and by Geometry; on which I did, and do believe it to be hung by all that do not find it (as indeed it is,

is, and as I find it is, and as many others before have found it) inlay'd in the Constitution of an Instituted Church, and in the Harmony of the Scriptures. Those that lay it otherwise, do not lay it on its true Foundations. But I never said as this Wyre drawing man, whose only business is to put me under *Odium*, and Envy with all Partys, would make me say; That all before me hung it but on Wyres; for *Those* did not, even according to that saying of mine, who founded it on Abrahams Covenant, and in the Constitution of an Instituted Church; as many did before me; and as even Mr. *Baxter* must; seeing the Membership of Children, which is the Principal Argument he goes upon, can not be understood but with Relation to the Constitution of a Church; and it is Inlay'd in the Covenant. And where now I Pray you, Sir, is that Vanity or that Contradiction which this Lincey'd man that Looks through stone walls hath Espy'd, or rather Invented? I say Invented; for when he Affirms (P. 3.) that I said I could not see it (meaning Infants Baptism) to be owner of sure and solid foundations, *Unless it be as I*
here

here lay it ;) he Imposes Grossly ; I said no such words ; I only said, (Unless it were Inlaid (as I find it is) in the very Constitution of an Instituted Church, and in the Harmony of the Scriptures.) and many to be sure, If not most now a dayes do take it to be so Inlaid ; All do, that Ground it on the Covenant of Abraham, though they do not All find it to be so in one way, and in the same Method.

As to his Third Exception ; Give me leave to tell you, that in the last Paragraph of my first Letter, speaking of some that in our Saviours time, did forbid little Children to come unto him to be Blessed, I said in a *Parentthesis*, and as it were smilingly ; not by way of Position as a thing on which I Insisted, but only *Pleasantly* (that some (it may be of your Perswasion) &c.) But such is the Judgment, the Exactness of Judgment of our great Disputer, that he takes as spoken *seriously*, That which was but *Pleasantly* spoken ; making it to Contradict what other where I say, concerning the Novelty of his Perswasion. And to perswade *his* Reader the better (for none that is *wine* can think so,)

so,) that he hath grounds for what he
 says; he *falsely* represents my words,
 and makes me say (*Pag. 3.*) “ That it
 “ is *Probable*, those that would not suffer
 “ little Children to come to Christ were
 “ of his Perswasion. Is not this an
 honest Disputant, or rather a cunning
 sophister? I said (some, it may be, of
 your Perswasion. And, it may be, is
 but happily, and that at most, is but a
Possibility, and he hath made *Probability*
 of it: in a word, hath made a Serious
 matter of what was only intended for a
 Divertive one. But of this I doubt not
 but I shall hear again, and be Rhimed
 for it. In the mean time, I will Ask
 him one hard Question, (*viz.*) Where
 it is that I do say, (as he says I do) to
this purpose, (that ’tis Probable, &c.) sure
 he can never find it, but where he finds,
 that *Mahomet’s Tomb at Mecca*, to use
 his own Expression (*Pag. 5.*) is said to
 hang by Geometry; or that the *Licians*
 suffered none to propose a New Law
 but at his Peril, (*Pag. 5.*) and that is
 no where, but either in his own Com-
 mon-Place-Book, or (to speak in his
 own most Civil Language) within his
 own *Pericranium*; and there, *Magnetism*
 and

and Geometry, Serious and Pleasant, Licians and Locrians, Scotus and Sotus are all one : and not so much as Mensa, as a Table between them.

I have ended with the Reflexions which he makes as to the Harmony of my Argument, the which you see, are so rarely Proper, and so Judicious, that you may well believe (though he say it himself *Pag. 64.*) *That his Reader will find (namely in his Book) somewhat of Brain as well as Tongue :* and somewhat of his Brain you have already had, upon the Harmony of the Argument. Now, you shall have somewhat too of his Tongue, upon the Novelty of it.

And upon this Head; First, He Gravely Informs me, that *Innovators bear not well among the Judicious*) (*P. 4.*) As if Anabaptists were not Innovators; but all for Antiquity, and the good Old way. Secondly; He is again at his Tales, *that the Licians* (he should have said the *Locrians*) *suffered none to Propose a New Law but at his own Peril*) (*P. 5.*) as if Arguments were *Lawes*; or that Infants Baptisme were not settled by ours. In fine; He Adds, (and you may think from Pure love) *that*
the

the Church of England (by all means, He
 is much Concerned for Her ;) *and all*
other the Assertors and advocates of Infants
Baptism on the Old Foundations, are more con-
cerned in one Passage than He) (P. 5.)
 As if all, of all orders, were fast asleep ;
 and all like to be lost, unless a Goose
 a Second time, should save the Capitol.
 You see Sir, his Extraordinary Cour-
 tesie for the *Church of England*, as well
 as for *other the Advocates and Assertors of*
Infants Baptism But I hope *this Church*
 and those other Advocates and As-
 sertors of Infants Baptism, will not, for
 all that, be Wheedled into a Mistake.
 You may be sure his Courtesie is but
 Polyphemus's ; Now indeed, He fights
 against one ; but know, he hath a
 Reserve for all (you now must look to your
Old Foundations ; He is Principally (P. 5.)
at Present at least) only concerned about the
new one.) Mark that, (*at Present at least.*)
 This Church, no more then others, hath
 no entire security (from him ;) It is
 not a Peace but only a Cessation he
 grants. (*He is at Present only concerned*
about the new one ;) But time may come
 for the old ones too ; And Really, he is
 Provided already if such a time shall
 come ;

come ; For (as you had it before, in his Letter) *He hath a very Large Discourse which he had before Compiled, in which he doth Consider and give Answer to all the most Material Arguments which are usually Insisted on for Justification of the Practice of Infants Baptism, &c.* The Church of England it seems (for all his Kindness to her) and all other the *Advocates and Assertors of Infants Baptism* (though now he claws them) might have heard of him sooner ; Ay, and have felt him too before this ; but that, unluckily for my self, but luckily enough for *this Church*, and for those other *Advocates and Assertors*, I did come in his way ; and now, the Cry is *Novelty ! Novelty !*

Truly I think it very needless, (and I could wish that others thought so too) to Vindicate my self from his *Extravagancies* upon this Topick, and to tell you, That the *Title Page* of my Book on which he principally grounds *Them*, as it went from me, was nakedly this : *An Argument for Infants-Baptism deduced from the Analogy of Faith, and Harmony of the Scriptures.* And what is added, if any Imputation can be laid to it, of Gaudinefs or Ostentation, it must be

Put on the Book-seller, as the Occasioner of it. I acknowledge it is said, that the *Method* is wholly New, and that it certainly is; but it is not said as this Disputer doth Report it, That the *Argument* is wholly New. Method and Matter are very different things, and in the very Title, where it is noted that the Method is wholly New; it is said of the Grounds, and these are Matter, not that they are wholly New, but that they are not commonly Observed. Implying, that they may have been, and are, by some, Observed, though, Happily, not by every Body: And who will say they were? And when I say, the Argument as I do manage it, hath little Authority; 'tis manifest I speak not of the Argument as to the matter and grounds of it; but as to the Method and Form of Managing of it. I say not, the Argument *Simply*, but the Argument as I do *Manage* it: the Method of Management is mine, and is New; but the Grounds on which it is Bottomed are not New; but are as Old as the Church, and as the Bible. In fine, to Alter Schemes, is not to Innovate Articles: Schemes are but Dispo-

Dispositions of Matter, and may be exceeding various, and often are, even where the Matter for the main is the same. But what if the Argument were New, and all as New as the Method? Would it to a Man of Conscience, a Seeker of Light, a Lover of Truth, go the less in Value but for That, if it is Good? It is not Antiquity any more than Novelty: It is Verity only, that ought to be considered by *Conscience*, and indeed that is; for, as old Arguments are not Entertained by *it*, only, because they are old. So new ones are not Rejected, only, because they are new. *Dies diem docet*: but I may not so much Imitate the weakness of my Adversary, as to fall a Common Placing, and therefore I say no more as to this.

Thus Sir, I have Followed my Adversary in his Prosecution of his two Topicks, Harmony and Novelty, and have considered his Reflections; and now, should very gladly dismiss a Subject so unpleasant; and so little to Edification: but that in a charge he makes upon me, both in his Epistle to the Reader, and in other places, there is another Instance of his Falshood, Malice,

and Calumny, Proper fruits of that Distemper (*zeal you must believe it for the abused word of God*) which (as himself tells you) *did put him out of his Temper and warmed him.*) And this I might not omit, he sayes, (' He dares Refer himself wholly to his Reader, ' whither I have not with equal Absurdity (*for so he modestly Expresses it*) First, ' made Abraham the Representative of ' the Carnal seed. Secondly, Included ' Baptism in the 17th. of Genesis. And ' Thirdly, Excluded the first grand ' Promise out of Genesis. 3. 15, &c. ' And he Wonders (*for he is given to Wondering,*) that I should see a command for Infants Baptism in Genesis ' 17th. and not discern a Covenant ' of Grace in the Third of Genesis. For ' this matter He dares Refer Himself to ' the Reader.) And indeed it is a daring ' matter.

For as to the First, *that I should make Abraham the Representative of the Carnal seed*) As he Expresses it, simply and Absolutely ; so, it is another Calumny, and is Maliciously said ; for in that very Letter in which I do Explain my self as to this Particular, there (P. 157.)

my words are these; (‘ on the whole,
 ‘ it is not absurd, if duly weighed, to
 ‘ say (which yet *I do not peremptorily say,*)
 ‘ that in That part of the Cove-
 ‘ nant in which *Abraham* is joyned
 ‘ with the seed, He should stand for his
 ‘ natural posterity, as the seed doth for
 ‘ Christ Mystical.) And *now* let the
 Reader judge; am I not so far from
 a positive affirmation of what he says *I*
make, that I say in Terms, I do not
 Positively affirm it? What I said, is
 Evidently said not by way of Position
 of what I did conceive as certain; but
 by way of Proposal, of what was yet
 Uncertain to me, but which yet might
 merit Consideration: and more is to be
 said for it, than Happily this Disputer
 can answer. Indeed in *Genesis* 17. 10.
 there, under the Term (ye) *Abraham*
 and *Ishmael* and the rest of the Family
 then Present are Comprehended, and
 those I take it, did represent and stand
 for the natural Family.

As to the Second, namely *Baptism* in
Genesis 17;) I never said in Terms that
 there was any *Immediate* Command for
Baptism in *Genesis* 17. I knew the In-
 stitution of *Baptism* was long after. I

only said, and still say, that an Obligation is lay'd in *Genesis* 17. 9. not only upon *Abraham* himself, to keep the Covenant, that is, the sign of the Covenant, but upon his seed also; and the *Apostle* says, that this seed is *Christ*, *Christ Myſticall*, or the believing Gentiles. And is this an absurdity? what *I* say, is in the Letter of the Text; and what the *Apostle* says, *I* hope is no absurdity. *I* take it for granted, because the *Apostle* says it, that the seed is *Christ*. To disprove *that*, is not to Put the absurdity on me, but on the *Apostle*.

As for the Third, which is concerning the Covenant of Grace in *Genesis* 3. 15) *I* still affirm, and still believe *I* may without absurdity, that though by the seed of the woman in that Text, our Saviour *Christ* be meant, and consequently, that he is *Predicted* there, and was *prefigured* also in Sacrifices; yet, that nothing *there* doth pass by way of Covenant, or is spoken of *Christ there* by way of promise to *Adam*; all is by way of Denunciation on the *Serpent*. *I* say, all that is spoken there is spoken but to the *Serpent*, not to *Adam*; and let him that thinks otherwise, but Look into the
Text

Text and see if it be not. I appeal from unwarie *Prejudices*, unto *Common sense*. But of this, as I have spoken somewhat in my Printed Letters, from Page the 99th. to Page the 106. So I have discoursed more fully (of it,) with Persons of a greater Character, and of more Integrity and Candour, than our Present Disputer; wherein, one day, the Reader may receive satisfaction. But for my Antagonist, he thought, *This* was a Popular Point, and that it would Affect me, and therefore only he Insists upon it, and so often Inculcates it; and is not this malicious? why had he not Argued it out? as I Expected he should; but that 'tis much Easier to Exclaim and Calumniate, than to Demonstrate and argue.

And now I am come (and very glad I am, that I am come) to the *fourth* thing I promised; and that is, briefly to state again the Argument I made, and to shew, how *little* He is in his Reply unto that, who is so *Great*, in Calumniating, and in Perverting. And the method I will take shall be, First, to lay down the *Grounds* of the Argument, and then to *form* it.

The *Ground* I go upon is this, That the Covenant Establiſhed by God with *Abraham*, and with his Seed, in *Genesiſ* 17. 7, 8, 9. is the *Covenant of Grace*; or that Original Grant, and Great Charter, by which Believing Gentiles always did, and do Claim both Heaven and Earth; and all the Promises they have Title to; As also, that *Abraham* is The Person By, From, and Under whom they Claim; as being his Seed. If *Chriſt's* then *Abraham's* Seed, and Heir's according to the Promise.

In this Covenant, as in all others that are Proper, there is, First, *A Promise* on the One Part, and then, Secondly, *A Restipulation* on the Other; A Promise on God's Part; and then a Restipulation upon *Abraham's* Part, and upon his Seed's.

As for the *Promise* that God doth make to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, it is, (*Verſ. 7, 8.*) That he will be a God to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, and will give to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, &c. And this Promise made to *Abraham*, in which Almighty God doth give Himself, and all he hath to him, is called by the Apostle the *Blessing of Abraham*; of which he

he says, That it doth Descend on the Gentiles, Gal. 3.

As for the *Restipulation*, which is on the Part of *Abraham*, and of his Seed, it is (*Vers. 9.*) *Thou shalt keep my Covenant Therefore thou and thy Seed*; In which *Restipulation*, it being the main thing on which I do insist in reference to my Argument, I shall (in order to the making Clear whatever any wise Relates unto it, and so concerns our present purpose) Particularly consider, *First*, the Nature of the Duty in it, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant*, and shew what is imported in that Expression. *Secondly*, I will shew the Propriety of this Duty, that it is a Duty bound on *Abraham* by this Covenant, as his Proper Duty, in Reference to it, and to the Blessing in it. *Thirdly*, I will demonstrate, That the subjects in this Restipulation and Duty, or the Persons upon whom the Duty and Incumbence is bound, are *Abraham* and his Seed, and that *Abraham's* Seed is, Principally, the *Believing Gentiles*.

As for the Nature of the Duty, or what is meant by *Keeping of the Covenant*. It was, at Last, Agreed between us (and I in my Argument, Fol. 132. 133. Abun-

Abundantly have Proved) that to keep Gods Covenant, which is the Duty enjoyned, is to *keep the Sign* of Gods Covenant ; And it must be Granted *Also*, that to keep the Sign, is, for him that keeps it, not only to *wear that Sign himself*, but to *put* it upon all His, in Token, that as he Himself, so that All he owns, is God's. This I proved in my First Letter, from Pag. 16. to Pag. 23. and Confirmed in my Advertilement ; to which I Add *now* another Consideration to make it further manifest ; namely, that in the Covenant, (and the Covenant for Substance is but one and the same) whereas God is pleased to say in *Genesis*, 17. *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed, and will give to thee and thy Seed, &c. And therefore thou and thy Seed shall keep my Covenant*, and to keep his Covenant, is to keep the Sign of his Covenant. I say, whereas he speaks so in *Genesis*, 17. he saith in *Jer.* 31. 17. (where he Repeats the same Covenant,) *I will be their God, and they shall be my People* ; what in *Genesis* is expressed by their *keeping of the Covenant* or Sign, is in *Jeremy* Expressed, by their being Gods Propriety, or own : So that, these are
Equivalent

Equivalent Terms; and the keeping of the Covenant of God (or his Sign,) is only to denote the Propriety that those who are in Covenant with God do All Acknowledge, All Own that he hath in them, and in All theirs. And thus it was *Interpr. ted* to *Abraham*; who was not only to be Circumcised Himself, but to see that all his Males, Old and Young were Circumcised; and in his Males, who only were Actually Circumcised, and only Capable of being so, the Females also were *Reputed Included*. For (as I said in my former Discourse) ‘ as ‘ the *Sign* was directly given Only to ‘ the Males, so the *Promise* also in Terms, ‘ was only to the Males, *Abraham* and ‘ *Isaack*; but then, as the Females were *Included* in the Males in the Covenant ‘ (for who will deny That?) so, by like ‘ Reason, they were included also in the ‘ *Sign*. It is but Reason that Concludes the *Former*, and the same Reason will Conclude the *Latter*. Besides, who will say the Females were Excluded the Passover? were they not of the Congregation of the Lord, and Members of the Families, or Houses, in which the Passover was Eaten, and by which ? are they

they Excluded any where? And is it not plainly intimated both by *Maimonides* and by other *Rabbins*, that even they also did Celebrate that Feast; but yet, none Uncircumcised might.

Well then, the Duty bound upon *Abraham*, and upon his *Seed* by the Covenant, is to keep the Covenant or Sign, by wearing of it themselves, and by putting of it upon *All* Theirs, in Token of Gods Propriety. The *Next Thing* is, to shew that this Duty which is bound upon *Abraham*, and upon his *Seed*, by the Covenant, is the *proper* Duty of the Covenant. And what can be more plain than that it is, seeing, *First*, It is bound upon them in Reference to the Promise, as a *Consequence* of it; *I will be a God to thee and thy Seed, and I will give to thee and thy Seed*; There is the *PROMISE*: *Thou shalt keep my Covenant* *THEREFORE*, *thou and thy Seed*; There is the Consequent *DUTY*. And 'tis the only Duty mentioned, as Required by God by way of Restipulation. And indeed, *Secondly*, it is called *Keeping of the Covenant*, and therefore, must needs be bound upon them by vertue of the Covenant, as the *Proper* Duty and Incumbence of

of it. *In fine*, it is most highly reasonable that it should be so ; For as God in this Covenant *Solemnly*, by Promise and by Oath, doth give Himself and All His to *Abraham*, and to his Seed ; Is it not most Fit, most *Proper*, that, by way of Correspondence, *Abraham* and his Seed should *Solemnly*, (and that is by some Open and External Rite, and Act, and such an Act and Rite, *Signing* is,) give up themselves and Theirs again to God ?

And here, by the way, it is Observable ; That, seeing the Command to keep the Covenant, is lay'd upon *Abraham*, and upon his Seed ; and seeing keeping of the Covenant is keeping of the Sign of it, in Token of God's Propriety ; it follows, That putting of the Sign on Children, and on Servants, is not done, at least not Principally, by vertue of any Title, Right, or Privilege which these Children, or Servants have, by vertue of their own immediate being in the Covenant ; but it is done, in *Consequence* of the Duty and Incumbence under which the Parents and Masters are, by vertue of the *Covenant* in which they do Restipulate, and so, take on them this Duty. As

As for the *subjects* in the Covenant, or Those on whom the Duty and Incumbence in it is bound, which is the *Third* thing to be Demonstrated, they are *Abraham* and his *seed*, or *Abraham* and *Isaac*; and in *Isaac*, Christ mystical, or the *Believing Gentiles*, *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed. And that Christ Mystical, or Christ and *Believing Gentiles* are Intended principally, by the Seed; I manifested in my First Letter, (P. 24. 25.) in my Second Letter (from P. 128. to 132.) and in my Last Letter, from *Romans* 4th 13, 16, 17; which Text doth put it out of all question, that *Isaac* did not only *Typifie* and *Figure* the *Believing Gentiles* in the manner of his Birth (as my Adversary would have it only do,) but that he did also stand for them, and Represent them in the Covenant of Promise. And if *Isaac* Represented the *Believing Gentiles*, and did stand for them (as he did) in the Covenant of Promise, then Certainly whatever Duty by virtue of that Covenant, was Bound upon him, That very Duty, by Virtue of the same Covenant, was also Bound upon them; Else, how could he stand for them and Represent them

in it! This Interpretation of that Text is so plain, so Evident, that even my Adversary in his *Last Letter* (P. 115.) says, I well Expounded *Romans* 4. 13, 16. 17.) but what he adds (viz.) ‘ that ‘ I do so to this Purpose, namely to ‘ Prove *Isaac* a Type and Figure of the ‘ Believing Gentiles in the way and ‘ manner of his Super-natural Birth, ‘ to which our Regeneration in Some ‘ sort Corresponds. That’s another Falshood, another Impious Fraud, and made on Purpose to deceive his Party; that when He cannot answer me, he may yet Impose upon them. For that I had no such purpose *there* as he Insinuates, is plain; for *there* I prove, that *Isaac* Represented the Believing Gentiles, or spiritual seed, not only in the Promise; but in the Duty and Obligation also, bound upon the seed by vertue of that promise; and I Appeal unto his own Party, or to any man Else that is of sence in all the World, that will compare his Letter and mine, if this be not so.

This is the *Ground* on which I state my Argument, which thus I Form. If the Believing Gentiles are under *Abraham’s* Cove-

Covenant, are *Abraham's* seed, and are Principally meant in the 17th. *Genesis* 9th. Then, the Believing Gentiles are to keep Gods Covenant: The Consequence is Evident, the Text is Plain for it; *Thou and thy seed shall keep my Covenant.* And if to keep God's Covenant *there*, be to keep the sign of his Covenant, by Wearing of it themselves, and putting it on all theirs, in Token of Gods Propriety; Then if believing Gentiles be to keep God's Covenant, they are to keep the Sign of it, by wearing of it themselves, and putting it on all theirs, in token of Gods Propriety, and Title: (Themselves must be signed, and, all theirs also must be signed.) Now, the Believing Gentiles are under *Abraham's* Covenant, are *Abraham's* Seed, and are Principally Meant and Intended in *Genesis* 17. 9. as I have proved; and to keep Gods Covenant *there*, is to keep the Sign of God's Covenant, by wearing of it themselves, and putting it on All Theirs, in Token of God's Propriety in them, and Title to them, as I have also proved before; and therefore the believing Gentiles are to keep God's Covenant, God's sign, by
wearing

wearing it themselves, and Putting it on all theirs, in Token of Gods Propriety in them, and Title to them; which Sign must be, either Baptism, or Circumcision, or some other Sign.

But for the greater Elucidation, I will break the Argument abroad, into shorter *Sillogismes*. *Abraham's* seed must keep God's Covenant; the believing Gentiles are *Abraham's* Seed; Therefore the believing Gentiles must keep God's Covenant. To keep God's Covenant is to keep the Sign of it; the Believing Gentiles must keep God's Covenant; Therefore the Believing Gentiles must keep the Sign of it. To keep the Sign of God's Covenant, is to wear it themselves, and to put it upon all theirs, in Token of God's Propriety in them, and Title to them; the Believing Gentiles are to keep the Sign of God's Covenant; Therefore the Believing Gentiles are to wear it Themselves, and to put it upon all Theirs, in Token of God's Propriety in them, and Title to them. *Abraham's* Seed must keep the Covenant, and to keep the Covenant is to keep the Sign; *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore THOU and*

D

thy

thy SEED. A Sign of the Covenant then, there must be in the *time of the Seed*; Else, how shall the *Seed* keep it? they cannot keep the Sign of the Covenant, if the Covenant have no Sign. Some Sign then the Believing Gentiles, which are the Seed, must keep, by wearing it themselves, and putting it on *All Theirs*; and if any, Let this Disputer tell (as I said) whither it shall be Baptism, or Circumcision, or what; for I need to go no further. Only here, as we go along, it may not be Unfit, in Order to the Preventing of further Calumny, to Observe, that when I speak in Reference to a Sign, of taking it themselves, and putting it on *All Theirs*, I mean nothing but their being Signed themselves, and their seeing that *All Theirs* be also Signed; without Considering here, or intending to Consider, who is the Minister of the Sign: But only who is the Subject.

This is my Argument, which in my Letter I did lay on four Propositions. First, That the Covenant or Blessing of Abraham, which is the Promise of the Spirit, is that Covenant of God, under which Believing Gentiles, the Spiritual Seed

Seed of *Abraham*, Are : and is the Blessing that doth Descend on the Gentiles. *Secondly*, That *All* the Seed of *Abraham*, that hath the Benefit and Advantage, of the Covenant and Blessing of *Abraham*, is under Equal Obligation, to the Duty and Incumbence of that Covenant, of that Blessing, as *Abraham* himself. *Thirdly*, That the Duty or Incumbence arising from the Covenant, or Blessing made to *Abraham*, is, That, in Token of his Dedication of himself, and of *All* his unto God, he should take himself, and should put upon *All His*, the Sign of the Covenant : which is the Mark and Sign of God. *Fourthly*, That from *Abraham's* Dedication of himself, and of *All* his unto God, there ariseth a *Distinction* of Holiness, into Internal and External, Absolute and Relative ; and that *This* Distinction is Evangelical. From these *Grounds* I drew the *former Conclusion* : and you may take the Argument from them *Briefly*, *Thus*. The *Blessing* doth descend upon the *Believing Gentiles*, and therefore the *Proper Duty* of that Blessing doth Descend also : and *this* is the *Proper Duty* of that Blessing, to see that both themselves, and all theirs

theirs be *Signed*, in Token of God's Propriety: and the Believer, that gives himself sincerely, is *Internally Holy*: and those that are given by him are *Externally* so. 'Tis you see in the former *four* Propositions, (which even my Adversary himself doth also Acknowledge, Pag. 25.) that the *main* strength of my *Argument* for *Infants Baptism* Consists: and yet, it is Plain, that, hitherto, there is no need of *any* Criticism, much less of Exactness of Criticism, and least of all, of Exactness of Criticism as a Part of Humane Learning: either to Conceive, or to make it: But as it is, I pray you let us take a View of his Reply unto it; Comparing what I say for Infants Baptism, with what he Answers to That I say.

But before we do so, give me Leave to tell you, that his way of Replying thrusts into my Thoughts a Story I have Read long ago in *Keckerman*, (and I hope I may be Pardoned if I shall tell one Story, when he does many) It is, that a Certain Respondent being Non-plust by his Opponent, and Unable to Conceive any Sensible Answer to return to him, makes use of two Non-sensical,

senfical, but strong words, to Chouse him. It (says he) Mr. Opponent you do take it *Archepodial-ter*, I grant it ; But it *Reflexive*, I deny it : That is, if you take it Nonsenfically one way, I grant it ; if you take it Nonsenfically another way, I deny it : and thus I take it, my Reipondent deals with me ; and he may be fure, and I believe he knows it, that I have not been the only Person who have said *fo* of him, on this Occa-
fion.

I hope, you will not think I go about to Abuse him, it is the very *Truth* I tell you ; for what Distinct, what Proper Sence is there in *what he says in Answer* ? or what Application of it can be *made* to either Proposition ? which yet, he would be thought to Reply unto ; but, inded doth only Elude : for, in Answer to the feveral *four* forementioned Propositions, he fpeaks *Thus*.

‘ In your first Proposition, I only allow
‘ the *Spiritual Effence* of the Covenant to
‘ Descend upon Believing Gentiles ; but
‘ that the *Additaments* and Appendages
‘ being variable things, and feparable
‘ from it, do not neceffarily descend
‘ with it I have *Elsewhere* at Large E-

vinced unto you. Here he should have told us, what is the *Essence*, what the *Spiritual Essence* of the Covenant, and what the *Additaments*, and should have Applied it.

In your Second Proposition, I Allow that the Seed of *Believing Gentiles* that have the benefit of *Abraham's Covenant*, and to whom it is made, are under an Equal Obligation unto those *Proper Duties* and Services *NOW* required of them, as *Abraham* was Himself; Understanding it of the Adult *Believing Off-Spring*, and not the *Infants* of *Believing Gentiles*. My Second Proposition speaks of the *Seed of Abraham*, (*viz.*) the *Believing Gentiles*: his Answer of their Children only.

In your Third Proposition, I Allow that the *Believing Gentiles* are Obligated to Dedicate themselves and all that is theirs to God, as *Abraham* was. But in as much as there is a double Dedication, the one by Baptism, and the other by Religious Education and fervent Supplication, this Latter Dedication I Allow; the Former as it Respects our *Infant Seed*, for the Reasons I have Elsewhere given you I deny.

I say there, that *Signing* is the Proper Duty of the Covenant; what is This to That?

‘ In your fourth Proposition concern-
 ‘ ing a twofold Holiness, External and
 ‘ Internal, Absolute and Relative, arising
 ‘ from the Covenant, though I grant
 ‘ that so it was under the former Ad-
 ‘ ministration, yet I have *Elsewhere*
 ‘ proved that as for any External or
 ‘ Relative Holiness then Arising from
 ‘ the Covenant, it is now Abolished.
 ‘ And as I have already also demonstra-
 ‘ ted that the first of Cor. 7. 14. doth
 ‘ not at all prove the Continuation
 ‘ thereof in the Gospel-Day, so neither
 ‘ is there any other Scripture that I know
 ‘ of, that can be Pertinently Alledged,
 ‘ for the Justification of such a Notion.
 ‘ Though I grant that there is an Ex-
 ‘ ternal and Internal Holiness now
 ‘ arising among Gentile Professors, the
 ‘ Latter from the Covenant, the Former
 ‘ from a meer Pretension to it. You
 see his demonstrations (as he calls ’em)
 His Proofs which should be *Here*, are all
Elsewhere. But what if they were
 here ?

What in all *This* is to the Business in hand ? for if the *Promise* or Blessing of *Abraham* do descend upon his *Seed*, the Believing Gentiles ; and the *Proper Duty* of that *Promise* or Blessing (which Descends) doth also Descend ; and to be *Signed* themselves, and to see that all theirs be Signed also, in Token of Gods Propriety and Title , is *That Proper Duty* : then let him Talk “ Of Spiritual Essence that doth Descend, and “ of Appendages that do not ; of Proper Duties and Services *now* required “ of them, understanding it of Adult “ Believing Off-spring, and not the Infant Seed of Believing Gentiles ; and “ that the Dedication must be by Religions Education and Supplication, not “ by Baptism. I say, let him talk in this fashion as long, as long as he lives : it will certainly follow for all That ; that the *Proper Duty Now* Requir’d of *Believing Gentiles*, is to sign themselves, and to see that *All* theirs (their Children also) are signed ; which as I said, must either be with Baptism, or with Circumcision, or with some other sign ; Let him tell which, or what. For Mark it, shall the Blessing descend, and not the

the Proper Duty of that Blessing ? Is not to keep the Covenant, as much a Duty Bound upon the Seed, as the Promise, a Blessing made to it ? Ay ! is not *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore thou and thy Seed*, as Plainly said, as *I will be a God to Thee and to thy Seed, and will give to Thee and to thy Seed* ? And if to keep the Covenant be, (as it is agreed to be) to keep the Sign, Let him distinguish as he will, (' with *Spiritual Essence*, and *Appendages* ; with *Proper Duty now*, and *then* ; with *Dedication by Religious Education*, and by *Baptism*. That is, with *Archepodialiter* and *Reflexive* : Certainly, to keep the Sign, is as much the *Proper Duty* of the *Seed*, and as much bound upon it, and All as fast, as the *Promise* it self is made unto it : And if the *Gentiles* that Believe, are (as I have proved, and as the *Apostle* says they are) *That Seed* ; Then, to keep the Sign, is as much the *Proper Duty* of the *Gentiles*, that Believe, and as much bound on them, and All as Fast, as the *Promise* and *Blessing there*, is made unto them. And this is not only high *Reason*, but *God's Express WILL* : *Thou shalt keep my Covenant Therefore thou and thy Seed*. It is
 God's

God's Mind, therefore it is to be done ; and that this is a proper way of Arguing, himself says. *Pag. 27.*

You may think it is impossible to speak more *Plainly*, and more closely to any Point, than here I have to this ; and that certainly the 17th of *Genesis* 9th. is very much to purpose, as to an Obligation upon Gentile Believers or *Abraham's* seed, with Reference to the keeping of some sign, and in the last Result, to the keeping of Baptism ; and happily you will think there needs no more than what is said already, to make it manifest, and beyond Dispute. But Sir, if these are your thoughts, they are not my Adversaries ; he tells me plainly, that if I will find a Rule as he speaks) in *Genesis* 17. or (as my self do word it,) If I will find any Obligation *there* upon believing Gentiles to keep the sign, in the way I have mentioned ; ' it will be incumbent on ' me to prove, First ; my three Partys ' (as he calls them) in the Covenant ' there mentioned. Secondly, my two ' signs ; Thirdly, that *Abraham* Re- ' presented the Carnall seed only in ' Circumcision, and *Isaac*, the spiritual ' seed in Baptism.)

I know it must exceedingly surprize you, to see me put on three *new* Issues; Especially, seeing in his fifth Letter (P. 71.) *All was fairly and Candidly Agreed* (for so he speaks,) to depend on ~~two~~ others, (*viz*) the Duty and the Subjects; And seeing also, he might as well have put me upon Proving that the *POPE* is Antichrist, that the Earth is a Planet, or that there is a world in the Moon, as on Proving the Points he Mentions; so little they are to the purpose. For, whither *three* Partys are in the Covenant, or but ~~two~~ Provided *Abraham's* seed be included in *one* of them, and that seed be *Believing Gentiles*: and though but *one* sign be spoken of *Determinately* and *Particularly*, and no more, and that one be *Circumcision*; Provided *Genesis* 17. 9. be understood of *Signing generally*: and though *Abraham* Represented not the Carnall seed *only* in *Circumcision*, nor *Isaac* the *Believing Gentiles* *at all* in *Baptism*, seeing he was never Baptised: Yet, if *Isaac* Represented the *believing Gentiles* in the *Covenant*, namely, in the *Promise* *verse* the 7th. and 8th. and in the *Obligation* and *Incumbence* *verse* 9th. Though he did

did not Represent them (as Certainly he did not) in *Baptism* ; (yet) It will as clearly follow, That the *Obligation* and Incumbence which was Bound on *Isaac* verse the 9th. as He Represented the *Believing Gentiles*, was, in him, in that verse bound on most fast upon them ; As, that the Promise and blessing which in verses 7. 8. was made to him, was in those Verses, in him, made and Confirmed also unto them ; and if that *Obligation* and Incumbence be to keep the Covenant, and to keep the Covenant be to keep the sign ; they must as surely keep the sign, by vertue of that Covenant ; as, by vertue of it, hope for the *Blessing*. The Duty is as much Bound on the seed, as, the Promise is made to it ; *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore thou and thy seed*. This (I must tell him again) is as Plainly said as, *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed, and give to thee and to thy Seed* ; and the same Seed is under the Obligation, that is within the Promise. These are not things that are barely said, but are Abundantly proved before, and Evident in the Text.

I know he says (P. 50) ' that as to
 ' what concerns the Obligation, there
 ' is nothing in the *whole 17th of Genesis*
 ' but what relates to *Abraham* and his
 ' Natural Family only, &c. God only
 ' then designing to signifie unto *Abraham*
 ' together with his Natural seed and
 ' Family, what was their *Present Duty*
 ' under the Then Present Administration
 ' on) And that God did signifie their
 Present Duty under that Administration
 is beyond dispute ; for therefore he In-
 stituted Circumcision , as that Duty.
 But that in that *whole Chapter* He should
 signify nothing as Duty and Incum-
 bence, but with Reference only unto
Abraham and to his natural seed and
 Family, can no more be said, than that he
 Signified nothing *there* as a blessing pro-
 mise and priviledge, but unto *Abraham*
 and to his Natural Seed and Family,
 only. For, the same persons, plainly,
 are in the Duty and Incumbence, that
 are in the blessing and promise, I will
 be a God *to thee and to thy Seed* ; I will
 give *to thee and to thy Seed* ; and therefore
thou and thy Seed shall keep my Cove-
 nant. And who shall be believed ?
 the *Apostle* that said, that that seed is
Christ

Christ, Christ Myſtical ; or this *Diſputer* that ſaith, no ſeed is meant there, but the *Natural Seed* and Family. But ſhall the *Seed* indeed be *within* the promiſe and bleſſing; and not *under* the Duty and Obligation? when yet the *ſame* Covenant, and God in the *ſame* Continued ſpeech, and to the ſame Perſons under the ſame Denomination, (*viz. Abraham and his Seed*) doth both bind on the Duty and make the Promiſe: who, but ſuch a Tender man as This is will dare to ſay, that *one* muſt ſtill *abide*, and the *other* be lay'd aſide; that we may take the bleſſing but leave the Duty? Certainly *they* that will not look to the *Old Teſtament*, for *new Teſtament Dutys*, muſt not Look to the *Old Teſtament*, for *new Teſtament Priviledges*. We muſt not claim by the *Old Teſtament Promiſe* and bleſſing, if we will not be under the proper Duty and ſervice, of that promiſe and bleſſing.

But to Return to his *three Points*, of which he ſays, it is Incumbent upon me to prove them, ' if I will find believing Gentiles any wiſe concerned in ' the 17th. of *Genefis*, with Reference to ' Signing; the Firſt is, my three Partys; ' the Second my two ſigns; the Third, ' *Abraham's*

‘ *Abraham’s* standing for the Carnal seed
 ‘ in Circumcision, and *Isaac’s* for the
 ‘ Spiritual in Baptism.)

To the First, that the Covenant is Tripartite; though still I say as I have said already, that, as to my Argument, I need not stand thereon; yet, it is Evident enough, from what I urged in my last Letter, (P. 155. 156.) to which I Expect a distinct Answer. And indeed, the *three* Partys are Distinctly Noted, and are God, *Abraham* and *Abraham’s Seed*; for first, the Covenant is made between God, and *Abraham*, singly and seperately, in his own person, *Genesis* 17. 2, 4, 5, 6. But then, in verses 7, 8, 9. *Abraham’s Seed* is taken in as well as *Abraham’s* self; and so, the the Covenant, which, had it been only between God and *Abraham*, would have been but *Bipartite*; Now, another party being taken in or Added, Namely, *Abraham’s seed*; becomes *Tripartite*.

To this, His answer is in the *Sixth Letter*, in which he glorys as Unanswered; and there he says, (P. 121.) ‘ that
 ‘ there was a Covenant Between God
 ‘ the Father and Christ, and after
 ‘ that a Covenant taking in all his seed,
 ‘ called

* called the Covenant of Grace, and
 * (says he) doth that make it *Tripartite* ?
 * are not Christ and Believers consider-
 * ed as one Parry ?) you see how The-
 ologically and how Divine-like he
 speaks (if this be he that speaks and
 not some *Supervisor*) as if the Covenant
 of Redemption, which yet (to Note it
 by the by) is never called, in Express
 Terms, a Covenant, in all the Scrip-
 ture, as if that Covenant were the same
 (Covenant) with the Covenant of
 Grace, and that what passed Between
 God the Father and the Son before the
 Worlds were, was the very *same* with
 what passed between *God* and *Abraham*
 and his *seed*, in time. The Covenant
 of Redemption indeed was Bipartite,
 it was between *God* and *Christ* only : But
 the Covenant of Grace is Tripartite,
 between *God*, *Abraham*, and *Abraham's*
seed or *Christ*, for *Isaac* the seed, is
Christ. In the Covenant of Redempti-
 on are but *two* named, but in this Cove-
 nant of Grace are *three* Partys. But
 on this, as being a *Logomachy* and strife
 about words, I do not much Insist.

The second Point to be proved, is, (he
 says) my two signs. And that Baptism
 and

and Circumcision are two signs, is not hard to be proved ; But doubtless, That is not his meaning ; he hath the Confidence to say, * That I do make two signs, not only under the two administrations, but Two Determinate Particular signs in *Genesis* 17. namely, Baptism in the 9th. verse, which says, (*but falsely,*) I call *The* sign ; and Circumcision in the 10th. for saith he (*P. 80.*) thus Runs your own Paraphrase upon the words ; “ therefore thou *Abraham* and thy seed *Isaac* in the Letter and Spirit, shall keep the sign of my Covenant, that is, both he and they, and thou also must be Baptised. (*P. 114.*) he says ; But say you though *Isaac* was Circumcised, and *Ishmael* too, yet there are *two signs* in that Text *Circumcision* and *Baptism.*) And (*P. 115.*) He says, But that there is any such sign as Baptism in *Genesis* 17th. and that *Isaac* was signed by it as a Type or Figure of the Gentile Believers (as you now seem to Affirm, and your Paraphrase Imports) I deny &c.)

You Sir, who have Perused my Letters, know very well how false and
E how

how Imposturous an Imputation this is ; and Bad is that Cause, which cannot be upheld but with Impostures, Lyes, and Forgeries. But (for the Rectifying of others, who happily have not seen those Letters, and who, otherwise, may be too Credulous to this Inventor,) I must say, I was so far from Affirming any thing of any Tendency to what he Impudently fastens upon me in the former Passages, that I never once thought it ; I only Affirmed, that *Isaac* (*Abraham's* Seed) did Represent and stand for Believing *Gentiles* in the Covenant, both as to the Promise and Blessing given to *them* and to the Duty and Incumbence put upon *them* ; This I did say, and but this ; and this, Let him Confute it if he can.

Nor did I ever say, that there were *two Determinate* and Particular Signs, namely, Circumcision and Baptism, either Instituted, or immediately intended in the Seventeenth of *Genesis* ; I said, that in the Seventeenth of *Genesis*, there was a double Obligation, namely, *First*, a more *General One*, Verse the Ninth, imposed upon *Abraham* and upon his Seed, (*viz.*) *Isaac* in the Spirit Principally ;

pally; and that was in *General Terms* to keep the Covenant; and to keep the Covenant, is to keep the sign of the Covenant, which I said, must be understood *Generally*, for keeping the Covenant in the sign of it, whatever the sign at any time be: and *not* Particularly and *Determinately*, for keeping of it *Immediately* in Circumcision or in Baptism, or in any other Particular Sign. Secondly, the *Particular* Obligation is in Verse the Tenth, and *This* is laid upon *Abraham* and his Natural Family, but not, in Terms, upon *Abraham's* Seed: and it is an Obligation unto *Circumcision*: This being the *Particular* Sign of the Covenant for *That* Administration of it.

But to this he tells me, (*Pag. 58.*) *You tax me* (and I believe by this, you see that I had reason to tax him) *for a bold Abuse in saying, that you intimate that Baptism is immediately intended in the Ninth Verse of Genesis, Seventeenth. Mark your own word, not Instituted, but Intended: whence I Argue, if Baptism be neither there Instituted nor Intended, if it be not in the Letter, nor Intention of that Text, it is not there at All.*

Here this Wyre-drawing man, instead of giving Satisfaction to my first Taxation (as he calls it) shamelessly incurs a second; for his perversion of my words, in what he says, is so Notorious, that truly it was *for Pitties sake* I passed it over in my last Letter, without a Reply; and yet he Tryumphs in it, that This was never Answered. I said, and do say, that Baptism is not *immediately* intended in the Seventeenth of *Genesis*, Ninth, and that the *Sense* of that *Verse* is *General* and indeterminate; whereas, if Baptism, or Circumcision either, were immediately intended, it must have been *Determinate* and Particular, not speaking (as it doth) of Signing in General, but of signing with This or That Particular Sign, which it doth not *immediately*.

But I pray you Sir, Observe here his Extraordinary Skill in making of *Arguments*, for thus he forms *His*: ' If Baptism be neither Instituted nor Intended in the Text, (*He should have said* immediately intended, *for so I did* :) and again, ' If Baptism be neither in the Letter nor in the Intention (for so he varies again, to Tenter it unto his
Pur-

Purpose, for I never said so.) What then ? *then it is not at all there* ; well concluded : If it be not at all there, it is not at all there. I said, it is not *Immediately intended* ; This he Reports ; (if it be not in the Letter nor in the Intention,) and that you will say, is very wisely said of him ; As if the Letter and the Intention were *Opposites*, and that That were not in the Letter of a Text, which is intended in it ; nor That intended in a Text, which is in the Letter of it ; whereas all other men, but he, do think that That is intended in a Text, which is the *Sense* of it ; and that to be intended is no more than to be *meant*. And may not that be *mediately*, I do not say *Remotely*, as he doth, to make a Quibble upon it (Ay, *Remotely enough*) may not that be *mediately* meant and intended, which is not so *immediately* ? and that *Secondarily*, which is not so *Primarily* ? Yes, doubtless. And *So* all Particular Instances are intended and meant in General Propositions ; not *Immediately* and *Primarily*, for *so* the Sense is only *General*, Else the Proposition were not *so* ; but *Secondarily* and *Mediately*. And thus Baptism may be intended in

the *Seventeenth* of *Genesis Ninth*, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant*, my Sign, *Thou and thy Seed*: not immediately, for so the Sence is but General and Indeterminate, God not having yet Discovered in what Particular Sign or Covenant, either *Abraham*, or his Seed should keep it; but it may be *mediately* intended, as it is a Particular Sign of the Covenant. I do not say, that the Sign of the Covenant must be kept generally and indeterminately; but I say, that those words *Verse the Ninth. Thou shalt keep my Covenant (or my Sign) therefore, thou and thy Seed.* must be understood Generally, and Indeterminately. But though the Sense be General and Indeterminate in the *Ninth Verse*, both as to *Abraham* and to his Seed, yet in the *Tenth* it is determined, as to *Abraham* and to his Natural Family; though not as to his Spiritual Seed. And if Determined but in the *Tenth*, it was not yet Determined in the *Ninth*.

I thought

I thought once to have said no more upon *this Particular*, than what I had before ; my meaning and intencion in it being so Perspicuous, to Prudent and Understanding Readers ; and his Absurdity and Grofness in Opposing it, so Plain and Manifest. But the Opinion of *the Many*, with whom the Last word is always a sufficient Answer, hath made it Necessary that I should say more. And therefore, once for All, to put my meaning out of *Doubt* (if it can be yet in *Any*,) I will here a little futher Illustrate it. And to this Purpose ; it having pleased God to say in the 17th. of *Genesis*, 9. *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed ;* Understanding, by keeping the Covenant a keeping *the Sign* ; Let us suppose he should have added, in the Tenth Verse ; *Circumcision* is the Covenant or Sign which thou *Abraham* shalt keep, and *Baptism* the Covenant or Sign *thy Seed* shall keep. Would it not in this Case, be very Evident that keeping of the Covenant or Sign in the Ninth Verse, must be understood but Generally, and Indeterminately, not, as yet for a keeping either of Circumcision, or of Baptism in Particular, but Generally

keeping Gods Sign be it what it will, when he shall Please to institute it. Now as God hath said, *Thou shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed in the Ninth Verse*, so he hath said *PARTITIVELY*, *This is the Covenant that thou shalt keep*, for so the Seventy render it; or, *That YOU shall keep*, (Distinguishing *YOU* from thy *SEED*) for so the *Hebrew*. But though he say what Covenant, or Sign it was that *Abraham* himself and his Present Family should keep, he leaves unsaid, as not proper yet to say, what Sign or Covenant the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* should keep; for *that* Seed being yet *Un-born*, it was but Reason that the Covenant or Sign it was to keep, should not yet be Instituted. *Ishmael* was at the Institution of Circumcision, *Isaac* was not there. *Ishmael* that stood for the Natural Family, He was there; *Isaac* that stood for the Spiritual Family, was then *Un-born*; and this *Timing* of the Institution, of Circumcision, as Inoted before, should be insisted upon; it signifies much.

But

But, in Regard my Adversary will be Apt to tell me, that the case I put is but supposition, and one may suppose any thing; I shall therefore take the Text as it Lyes, and only ask him two or three *Questions*, to which I do Expect Direct and Categorical Answers. The First is, whither Circumcision were Actually Instituted in the 9th. verse? for if it was not, (as indeed it was not, for it was not Instituted but in the 10th.) then certainly to keep the Covenant in verse 9. could not be Determinately to keep Circumcision. I ask him again, If this proposition, Circumcision is Gods Covenant, or Gods Sign, be an *Identick* proposition, and do signify no more, than that Circumcision is Circumcision? for if he say it signifies more (as I should think he will,) then the Term Covenant or Sign, in it, must signify Generally and Largely. In fine, I would Ask him if when it Pleas'd God to say, *this is my Covenant which you shall keep, every man Child among you shall be circumcised*, He then said no more than what he had before in verse the 9th. *thou Shalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed?* For if God do say no more, or no other in verse 10. than

than he had said before in verse 9. then he saith but the *same again* ; But if he do say other, or more, (as undoubtedly he does, for now and not before, he tells what the Covenant is,) then keeping of the Covenant *verse* the 9th. must be understood but generally ; as certainly it must, and I have Evincedit must ; in some measure in my First Letter (P. 25, 26, 27.) but more expressly, in my Second ; from (P. 85. to 91.) and most fully in my Last , from (P. 150. to 154.) In these Places you will see the Vanity of his *Boast* (P. 62.) (viz.) ' that the sence cannot be General and Indeterminate, for a General ' Indeterminate sence is no sence.) Thus, General and Appellative Expressions are Nonsensical to this man, and (*owe no man any thing but to Love one another* ,) at this Rate, shall signifie nothing ; (as indeed, it seemeth not to signifie much with Him ; because it is not said Owe not James, Peter, John, or Paul, but (*owe no man*,) nothing but Love.

And so much for his two signs ;) a Fiction of his Own, which he would fasten on me ; whereas I never spoke, or thought of two particular signs, as
 Actually

Actually Instituted in the 17th. of *Genesis*, but only of *signing Generally*, spoken of *verse 9.* and of a *Particular* sign instituted In *verse* the 10th; Thus I spoke, and still speak; which no more doth signify *two signs*, than when one shall say, (God made *man* a Reasonable Creature, and *Peter* is a *man*,) He speaks of *two men*; of one in the former proposition, and of another in the Latter.

As to the Third Point which he would put me upon, which is to Prove, ' That *Abraham* Represented the Carnal ' Seed only in Circumcision, and *Isaac* ' the Spiritual Seed in Baptism) I have spoken abundantly what my sense is, as to the *former*, already : and, as to the latter, I have also already shewed it a *Calumny* as to the *Implication* that *Isaac* was Baptised, and in Baptism was a Type. But though *he* was not a Representative or Figure of the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, the believing Gentiles, in *Baptism*; seeing he never was Baptised; yet that he was a Representative of them in the *Covenant* of Promise, and that as well in the *Duty* and obligation, as in the *Privilege* and Blessing of it, is, I think, by this, beyond all Dispute. But of all this

this I have said enough before ; *Isaac* was not a Representative of the Believing Gentiles in *Baptism*, but in the *Covenant*.

As to the 1 *Cor* 7. 14. from which I prove there is an External Relative holiness under the Gospel, as well as an Internal and absolute ; He Roundly tells his Reader (*P.* 24. (for he never told me so before ;) ' That as he hath ' already *Demonstrated*, it doth not at ' all prove the Continuation of any ' External or Relative holiness arising ' from the Covenant.) But Sir, you must not be too Easy in Believing of him as to Demonstration, for I Assure you, after what I answered in my First Letter, (from *P.* 33. to 49.) which once you thought beyond Exception, and, I hope, still do, I never Received the least reply in any of his Letters as to That ; and therefore, what he speaks (*P.* 24.) of *Demonstration* here, It is as what he says of it in many other Places, and with Reference to many other Particulars (*viz.*) But a Vision of his too much heated fancy, and a Popular charm. The world must know that he hath done

done great things *some where*, but he cannot tell *where* himself.

Not that *I* would have you think too Confidently, that here he is *Catcht*; for though he have Affirmed, as you may see he hath, that he has *already* Demonstrated, when Indeed he has *not*; you must not presently believe he cannot make it out: for this, as Difficult as you or *I* would think it; It is an Easie Atchivement to a man of his Performance. He that can find a sign in *Genesis 17. 9*, as *implied in the sence*, (for so he speaks *P. 105.*) when yet himself says, *the Text mentions no sign at all or gives the least hint of any*; He *I* say that can Affirm, *the Text Mentions no sign at all, nor gives the least hint of any*, and yet can Interpret what he sayes, (as he does,) that *there is no such Term, or a Syllable of that sound in the Text*; that is he that can say a thing is in the sence of the Text, that is neither *mentioned*, nor *Hinted* in the Least, in the Terms of it; He may say what he will; you must not think to hold him; if you think you have Him fast in the very *Terms*, he will give you the slip by a *Syllable of the sound*;

sound; and save his Contradictions with Nonsense. To be *Mentioned* and *Hinted*, which (with all others) is, to be *Express'd* and *ImPLY'd* in a Text; by this Interpreter, shall be understood of *Sounds*, and not of *Senses*, Ay, though it be said, no Mention nor hint of *any sign*; And he that says (any sign) cannot be understood to mean the sound (sign.)

The Mention of the 1 Cor. 7. 14; Reminds me of his *Amazement*, (P. 128.) for he is often Amazed; Amazed *much* he was, at my Exposition of *Genesis* 17. 9. 10. and now again Amazed *almost as much*, at my Interpretation of *Rom.* 4. in my Argument (from P. 166. to 168.) And indeed, nothing but a *Maxement* can Excuse his great mistakes; as, *that I should say the Reward to Abraham was Personal and Earthly, and was of Canaan only; and that my Expressions have a sound that is Harsh and dissonant to Rom. 4. and 4.)* My design in Touching on this Text, was only to Evince that *Abraham's* Receiving Circumcision as a Seal of the Righteousness by Faith (which he had urged, was nothing Contradictory

to what I said Concerning His standing with *Ismael*, and the Rest of the Family *Gen. 17. 10.* in the Business of Circumcision; how that *they* stood for and Represented ~~there~~ the whole natural Household. That *Canaan* was the Reward of *Abraham's* Faith, who but such a Sophister, dares soberly to Deny it? the Text is plain for it: *Genesis 15. 17.* But that Heaven also was not his Reward, I did not say; no more then the Text doth, which though in the Letter it doth but Mention *Canaan*, yet surely, it did not Exclude Heaven. And as for the Danger, and Dissonancy in my Expressions to *Romans 4. 4.* I ask him; was not the Reward given to *Abraham*, for his Believing? How else was it that his Faith was Accounted unto him for Righteousness? for though the Reward was Infinitely much Superior to any Desert of his Faith, and was a Thing that God in Justice, was no ways Oblig'd to make; yet a Reward it was, and a Reward (in the very Idea and Notion of it) is of and For something: A Reward it was, but a Reward of Grace, not of Debt; God gave it as a

Gre-

Gratuity, for what *Abraham* did; but *Abraham* could not have Demanded it as his due, or a Debt.

After this He tells me (*P. 129.*) that all that follows to the close (namely, in my last Letter from *P. 169.* to the End.) is but strife about words; In which he finds not any thing but what doth Nauseate.) But you Sir, will find a Vindication in it of that (But) incerted in my *Paraphrase*; and also a Demonstration in it that (ye) in *Genesis 17. 10.* even from his own Concessions, cannot be understood of *Abraham* and that his Seed which is in verse the 9th. but must be meant of *Abraham Ishmael*, and the Rest of the Then Present Family; and Consequently, that Circumcision was not then Enjoyed on the Seed as it stands in the 9th verse, for the Believing Gentiles; but only on the Natural Family; which was the Main thing to be Proved.

I do not know I have omitted any thing of Moment, (for his Scoffs, Jears, Gibes, &c. are of none) among his *Reflections*: no, nor any thing in His Last Letter, that is to the purpose; Except a *Sophister*

phister will think I should consider his Logick (P. 120.) and, because *Stierius* and *Sanderfon*, and indeed other Logicians, Generally, do say, (and he must be a very Mean One that doth not know so much,) that *Members of a Division must be Opposite*; Meaning not properly, that they must be *Enemies*; but that they must not *Interfere* and be *Coincident*; That therefore, it must be concluded, That *All Distinction is Opposition*; that *Disparates* are *Opposites*; and that God, *Abraham*, and his Seed, cou'd not be *Distinct Partys*, if they were not *Opposites*, and even *Enemies* to one Another. But if any think so, I Leave him to the Care of this Apothecary, and to *Hellebore*. You may be pleas'd to see what I have said in my Argument (P. 153, &c.) as to This.

Upon the whole, Sir, you cannot but Observe how Little Reason there is to Trust my Adversary in Citations and how much cause I have to make you and All his Readers this Request, that you never believe that I Affirm, or deny any thing which he, hereafter, though with never so much Confidence shall Report I do, unless you first con-

sult my own Writings, and see it there : And *I* would also desire of **Him**, that seeing he is so much given to mistake my Meaning, He would never Report my sence, But in mine own Terms ; and That is but a fair Request.

In fine, I am not much Afflicted that my Adversary gave me this Occasion of Writing again on this Subject. *I* know that Truth, Like silver, will appear the Brighter for being Burnished. The more He Presses this Controversy, the more the Subject of it will come in Discourse ; and Discourse, in Time, will Ripen and Mellow Notions in the Minds of Men, which At First, seem hard and Harsh. Nor will his Pious Frauds, His Rayling upon Arguments instead of Answering of them, His unsober Reflecting on His Adversary instead of Arguing with him ; His Base Hints ; or his Direct Scurrillities, which *Even now* Dis-serve hiscause with Wise and Good men, Uphold it *Long* with any. These are mean, Unmanly, and Unchristian Methods, and (Let him Note it) never used but in Extremity, and when a
Case

[79]

Case is Deplor'd; which *His* being, I
hold it time to End this Trouble

From

Sir,

Your Faithfull Friend

*Bowdon. July 4.
1684.*

and Servant.

R. B

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8

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